

Pastor Kent's Miller Avenue Church Newsletter for January 2023

Dear Church Family,

Christmas and New Years—we survived, didn't we. Yes, we did, even survived 2022, the pandemic, and more. And yes, we lost two wonderful members of our congregation, Laurelle and Maggie. During their last days, they remained faithful followers of Jesus. Laurelle went through some difficult days as she knew what was coming and her health deteriorated unpleasantly. Her daughter Ingrid was there all the way and through the hard times when it was clear there would be no recovery.

Maggie died one day later than Laurelle, and in her sleep. I visited both of these ladies as often as I could, and when I showed up at Maggie's there would be Michael Brown, Maggie's son. And it was but a short time ago that Maggie and Michael suffered the loss of Kitty, Maggie's daughter and Michael's sister. When I visited Laurelle, there was Ingrid, having taken time off from her work. And a number of folks helped Ingrid with the tasks that had fallen to her. Thanks to you all.

It is quite normal to fret about not doing enough in the face of serious illness and deterioration. It is also normal to place some blame on ourselves. I did, and over both ladies. We have to let this go, though; we do remember to pray, and sometimes this is all we can do.

We enter into a new chapter in the history of our MAC: Vern has moved on and James Daley is taking over as treasurer. Once this is in place, we will begin to prepare for the 4th quarter congregational meeting, the last Sunday of January. It might take us some time to get up to speed with the by-laws, but we will.

With the new year, we continue hard after the work. There will be a Tuesday night Bible study at the parsonage led by James [late revision: change that to Thursday]. A new 8-week session on divorce recovery begins the 2nd week in January. We took some time off with the television programs, and we are back on full swing in a week. Currently, I am working on three different essays: "Troublesome Times," "The Accuser," and "What It Is to Be in a Cult." (The title of this essay will likely change.) Then the first week in January, well maybe the second one, we are plowing back into the book on psychic and occult practices. We cover about 20 of these, and I am now going back over each chapter to clean things up and add details. It is from this book that we will continue to make tracts so we can hand them out. So far, Katie has produced one of these. This particular book may well be my last hurrah, though I do intend to do a book on the paradoxes of the Bible based on the series of sermons I have preached on this vital subject. We feel now that the roughest of times are behind so that we can carry on the work full out.

No baseball coaching this year—turning away from as much as I can. I am learning special teams coaching for football this next year. Talk about complicated!